

MEETING 30/10/2019

Ref: 15396

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

Circles South East

Adv: Kate Moralee

Base: Waltham Forest

Amount requested: £150,000

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £150,000

The Applicant

Circles South East, a Company Limited by Guarantee has operated since 2002 and was incorporated in 2008, with the aims of reducing instances of sexual abuse and assisting those impacted by sexual abuse in their recovery. It is a member of Circles UK, the national umbrella body which supports the development of effective Circles of Support and Accountability, a model rooted in the principles of restorative justice. Circles SE delivers Circles of Support across the South East with its London work having started in 2015 funded by the Big Lottery. It works in partnership with the Police and National Probation Service (NPS).

The Application

Funding is sought to continuation of the delivery of "Completing the Circle" model of support to perpetrators of sexual violence in London. The service works in partnership with the Police and National Probation Service (NPS). Funding from the Lottery for this programme ends in October 2019, with the NPS supporting delivery of half of the programme moving forward, Circles SE is in discussions with MOPAC and the Metropolitan Police for support for another quarter of the programme and is requesting support for a further quarter of the programme from the Trust.

The Recommendation

The charity has demonstrated the effectiveness of this model with strong outcomes evidenced through evaluations, "the charity has established itself as a beacon in its field (Henry Smith Charity). This service focusses on the perpetrator, whilst other services support survivors, families and partners. This proposal meets the criteria of your Positive Transitions programme under your ex-offenders priority area. Funding is recommended:

£150,000 over 3 years (£50,000 per year) for the full-time salary of a Circle Co-ordinator, volunteer training and associated costs.

Funding History

None.

Background and detail of proposal

Circles of Support and Accountability were first established in Canada in 1994 and brought to the UK in 2002 by Quaker Peace and Social Witness. A Circle is essentially a group of 4 trained volunteers working with a high-risk sexual offender (Core Member) in their community, reducing isolation and loneliness reducing the risk of reoffending over a period of 18 months. Initially the group builds trusting relationships, then introduces challenge to the Core Member, with the last six months including meeting in community venues.

Volunteers are also equipped to monitor the behaviour of their Core member assisting Police, Probation and other partnership agencies in the management of that person's risk. There are numerous independent evaluation studies carried out on the work of Circles of Support and Accountability which have proved that they significantly reduce reconviction rates among this particular group of offenders. Circles SE random control study reported 0/70 reoffending rates for Core Members against 10/70 for the control group.

All Circles South East's volunteer training is certificated with the additional opportunity of acquiring an OCN volunteer qualification. Circles SE has worked with over a thousand volunteers since 2002. Volunteer recruitment and training is robust, including interview, training and post training debrief, regular supervision and annual review, access to practice forums and reflective practice sessions. It is essential for the success of the model that volunteers understand their role and receive high levels of support and training.

This programme of work has been funded by Big Lottery for four years, ending October 2019. The full project has a senior coordinator and four project coordinators (covering quadrants of London). Referrals to Circles SE are made by the Police and NPS. NPS has committed to supporting the programme by seconding two of the coordinators to continue its delivery and talks are in progress with MOPAC for a third coordinator post.

Financial Information

Trusts and Foundations are the main sources of funding for Circles SE, due to the sensitive nature of the work they do, though it is increasing income generation services (training and consultancy). The organisation is confident of achieving its increased income projections, though has contingency plans in place should this not be the case. Circles SE receives capacity building support, including consultancy through Lloyds Bank Foundation's Enhance programme and is currently exploring potential legal structures which could include a trading arm. The trustees are committed to building the reserves to the required level by adding £35,000 each year over the next five financial years.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Signed Accounts £	2019 Draft Accounts £	2020 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	937,026	954,070	1,110,911
- % of Income confirmed as at 09/30/2019	N/A	N/A	60%
Expenditure	(1,027,204)	(975,895)	(1,038,833)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(90,178)	(21,825)	72,078
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(38,246)	0	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(51,932)	(21,825)	72,078
	(90,178)	(21,825)	72,078
- % of Income	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	363,492	502,452	758,177
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	71,094	49,269	121,347
No of months of operating expenditure	2.3	1.2	1.9
Reserves policy target	205,000	205,000	205,000
No of months of operating expenditure	6.8	4.9	3.2
Free reserves over/(under) target	(133,906)	(155,731)	(83,653)